

Introduction to Philosophy Master Syllabus

Cluster

Wisdom, Faith, and the Good Life

How do faith and reason help us to know what is good and true? What does faith have to offer reason, and what does reason have to offer faith? Faith opens new horizons for reason, and reason challenges faith to greater understanding and refinement. *Theology* is the free, rigorous, and methodological study of God's self-revelation in the person of Jesus Christ encountered in community. *Philosophy* is the free, rigorous, and methodical use of logic and argument in search of truth. The courses in this cluster introduce students to the experience of doing philosophy and theology, both where they converge and where they diverge. The experience of doing philosophy well is of discovering new, surprising, wonderful, and sometimes baffling depths and complexities to existence, our lives, and our beliefs. The aim of theology is the good life as informed by the critical study of sacred scripture, the lives and ideas of people who search for God, and the moral investigation of the personal and common good. Theology integrates the methods of many disciplines such as philosophy, history, literature, and science. This cluster plays a special role in the Catholic mission of King's College to transform minds and hearts with zeal in communities of hope.

Core Goal Served in this Category

Goal 2: To lead students to become conversant with the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Core Learning Outcomes

A student successfully completing a course in Introduction to Philosophy will be able to

1. Critically analyze some of the Catholic intellectual tradition's major texts, themes, concepts, figures, and histories (Core Goal 2.2)
2. Construct and defend an argument on wisdom, faith, or the good life (Core Goal 2.4)

Catalog Description / Introduction

Philosophy is the attempt to answer, through rational reflection, the deepest and most fundamental questions of human existence. What is the meaning of life? How can people achieve true happiness and fulfillment? Does God exist? What do we mean by God? Why should we be moral? How should we decide what is right? Are people really free? Do humans have souls, or are we just physically complex organisms? What is a soul? Is there life after death? What can we know and how can we know it? This course invites students to critically reflect on these and other perennial issues through contemporary and historical texts.

Intangibles / Aspirations / Other Category-Level Elements

In addition to the outcomes assessed in this category, other Core outcomes might be developed and addressed. Skills, competencies, and dispositions relevant to the field might also be cultivated in this category.

- Help students develop the foundational skills and competencies of written communication, critical inquiry and analysis, and technological competency and information literacy (Core Goal 1)
- Identify and explore ideas of faith, reason, and meaning (Core Goal 2.1)
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of philosophical and Christian ethics (Core Goal 3.1)
- Analyze moral arguments about matters of contemporary and perennial importance in view of differing moral perspectives locally and across cultures (Core Goal 3.2)
- Construct, evaluate, and defend moral arguments about matters of contemporary and perennial importance (Core Goal 3.4)
- Develop self-awareness about core moral convictions and a capacity for self-criticism and scrutiny (Core Goal 3.5)
- Evaluate the strengths and limits of the scientific method and articulate the relationship between science and other ways of seeking knowledge (Core Goal 5.3)
- Embrace intellectual challenge and struggle, and put forth the effort to complete demanding work (Core Goal 7.4)

Teaching Methods and Assessment

1. Learning Outcome 1 will be assessed using a rubric with a 4-point scale to grade an essay on an exam or a paper.
2. Learning Outcome 2 will be assessed using a rubric with a 4-point scale to grade an essay on an exam or a paper.

Texts

Each instructor may choose a text or texts best suited to his or her pedagogical goals and individual teaching style.

Additional Information / Resources for Instructors

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Courses

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy (3).

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